

# Overview of Changes to Alexandria's Environmental Management Ordinance

## Stream Protection

New State mandates require that all City streams with perennial flow must be protected by a 100-foot Resource Protection Area buffer.

- Existing regulations already protect approximately 20 miles of streams and Potomac River shoreline with buffer areas.
- The City will protect an additional 1.8 miles of stream based on the results of a City-wide stream assessment.
- The City's RPA map is now only guidance. An assessment must be performed before a land disturbing activity to determine if any perennial waterbodies are present.

The City proposes to protect intermittent streams in natural channels with a 50-foot buffer area.

- Protecting intermittent streams is above and beyond what is required by State minimum standards.
- The 50-foot buffer area is not a Resource Protection Area and therefore affords greater flexibility in how to meet the requirement.



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## Exceptions Process

New State mandates require that all exceptions to the Resource Protection Area requirements go through a public hearing process.

- The City proposes to meet this requirement by having the Planning Commission conduct the hearing.

## Maintenance

The City proposes to strengthen maintenance requirements for stormwater facilities.

- Owners of stormwater management facilities will be required to submit certification that maintenance is being performed.
- Reporting requirements will be based on the maintenance needs of the particular facility.
- The City will have the ability to perform needed maintenance and bill the owner if it is not being done.

## Public Input

Public hearings will be held by the Planning Commission on May 4th and the City Council on May 15th.

- Comments may also be submitted in writing to the Division of Environmental Quality.

## Water Quality

The City proposes to adopt a "toolbox" approach to meeting the ordinance's water quality requirements.

- The existing regulations require the use of traditional on-site stormwater management techniques such as wet and dry ponds and sand filter systems.
- On-site and off-site alternatives to these traditional facilities can in many cases result in additional environmental benefits such as improved habitat and more open space and result in fewer waivers .
- What will be in the toolbox?

*Traditional on-site stormwater facilities.*

*Stream and buffer restoration*

*Stream daylighting.*

*Removal of encroachments into RPAs.*

*Combined sewer separation.*

*Green rooftops.*

*Permanent preservation of open space.*

*Contribution to the Alexandria Water Quality Improvement Fund.*

*Other tools identified by the City*

- The City, working with the property owner, will determine the best approach for a site using eight criteria.